

salt-marsh). Such salt-marsh vegetation is occasionally inundated by tidal water. Thus, spring tides reaching 10.4m ordnance datum in September 2005 caused extensive flooding at the Green Beach and Marshside. Evidently, the conehead populations are able to survive these exceptionally high tides.

It is interesting to speculate on the origin of these *C. dorsalis* populations. While the upper salt-marsh at Warton was formed between about 1862 and 1888 (Grey & Scott, 1987), the Sefton Coast habitat is no more than 10–15 years old (personal observations) so the insect must have arrived here recently. The distance from Anglesey to the Sefton Coast sites is about 75 km, while Warton Marsh is a further 55 km to the north of Marshside. These are long distances for a generally flightless orthopteran. However, Warne & Hartley (1975) consider the possible dispersion in sea-borne flotsam of *C. dorsalis* eggs, which can survive several months in sea-water. Influxes by flight of the long-winged form *burri* cannot be ruled out, especially in warmer summers when such forms are more frequent (Marshall & Haes, 1990).

In view of the ease with which this species is overlooked, it seems likely that careful searches, especially with a bat-detector, will discover *C. dorsalis* on other north-western salt-marshes, such as those on the Dee and other parts of the Ribble and Morecambe Bay.

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#### SHORT COMMUNICATION

***Volucella inanis* (L.) (Diptera: Syrphidae) in Perry Woods, Kent.** – A specimen of this large hoverfly was observed visiting flowers of *Eucryphia* in our garden, in Selling, east Kent on 31.viii.2006. This is the first time the species has been recorded in the garden. The main reason for observing it was the appearance of several noisy hornets which along with numerous *Bombus* spp. were attracted to the tree's large white flowers. Morris and Ball (*BJENH* 16: 221–227) report on the recent expansion in range of this hoverfly in England (up to 1999, thereafter the species shows a possible decline) and speculate on whether its success is due in any way to the changing fortunes of the hornet. The sudden appearance of both species may be significant. – J. S. BADMIN, Coppice Place, Selling, Kent ME13 9RP.